



UPDATED COMMUNITY NOTICE – 10/14/21

Los Angeles County's Response to Odors Reported in City of Carson

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (Public Health) is issuing the following guidance for those that may be impacted by foul odors detected in the vicinity of the Dominguez Channel in the City of Carson and in surrounding communities. Intermittently elevated, but not toxic, concentrations (levels) of hydrogen sulfide, which smells like “rotten egg”, have been detected in the air in the same areas. At this time, the source appears to be naturally decaying organic material (vegetation and marine life) at the bottom and sides of the Dominguez Channel in Carson. No other point sources for the hydrogen sulfide have been identified as air monitoring of the surrounding areas continues. Los Angeles County Public Works continues working to address and monitor the issue in the Channel, while the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), County Fire Hazardous Materials (HazMat), and Public Health continue to evaluate and monitor hydrogen sulfide concentrations and mitigate health impacts.

HOW DO I REPORT ODORS?

If you notice “rotten egg” or “sulfur” odors, you can report them. A complaint can be filed online with South Coast Air Quality Management District at <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/air-quality/complaints>, or by telephone at 1-800-CUT-SMOG (1-800-288-7664).

ARE THE ODORS HARMFUL TO MY HEALTH?

Hydrogen sulfide is a colorless gas that has a very strong odor (like “rotten egg”). Its smell can be detected and cause temporary mild to moderate symptoms even below the minimum detection limit of 1 part per million (ppm) or 1000 parts per billion (ppb) of typical equipment used to detect it. Everyone should take steps to reduce their exposure when the odors are present. The health effects of hydrogen sulfide can vary depending on the level and duration of exposure. The levels detected, thus far, are not expected to cause irreversible health effects. They are high enough to cause a strong, foul odor in the community, which in some cases can lead to headaches and irritation in the eyes, nose, throat, and lungs. These symptoms may be accompanied by dizziness, nausea/vomiting or abdominal discomfort. These symptoms should be short-term and typically resolve when the odor goes away or when the person is in an area where the odors are not present. Symptoms can be worse in people with pre-existing lung or heart conditions, such as asthma, COPD, or heart disease. If symptoms are persistent, worrisome, or worsening, people should seek medical attention and take steps to reduce their exposure to the odors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While the effort to get rid of the odor continues, Public Health recommends you consider taking the following actions to lessen symptoms and protect the health of you, your family, and your pets:

- 1) If symptoms feel life threatening, seek immediate medical care.
- 2) If symptoms are persistent, worrisome, or worsening, seek medical attention and consider relocating to another area until odors go away.
- 3) Keep doors and windows closed as much as possible to prevent outdoor odors from entering your residence or business. Air out your home/business when odors are not present.
- 4) If you have a central heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, contact an air conditioning specialist, if needed, to determine if the air filters in your system may be replaced with High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) or MERV-rated filters with activated charcoal (carbon) to improve the air quality inside.
- 5) Use a certified portable HEPA indoor air filter with activated charcoal to improve air quality in your home. See some examples of portable HEPA indoor air filters with activated carbon on the reverse side for consideration.
- 6) Keep pets indoors. If you notice any of the following in your pets, please contact your local veterinarian: difficulty breathing, vomiting, lethargy, or nausea.



People experiencing persistent, worrisome, or worsening symptoms from the odors are encouraged to contact their health care providers, especially if they have any chronic health conditions. People should also ensure that they have adequate supplies of their medications, especially if they have heart or lung conditions. In addition, Public Health recommends temporarily leaving the area where odors are present to alleviate health impacts.

For more information on protective measures to prevent odors from entering the home, please contact the Public Health Community line at 626-430-9821 and leave a message with your contact information and your call will be returned. The message line will be checked every hour between 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day while odors persist. You can also visit <https://lacounty.gov/emergency/> for more information.

Air Cleaners and Filters to Improve Indoor Air Quality and Remove Odors

Air filters, as described above, designed for use in HVAC systems, if properly configured and maintained, may have the greatest potential to improve your entire home's air quality because most HVACs circulate very large volumes of filtered air throughout the home.

Portable units are usually best for single room use, rather than multiple room or whole-house use, because of their limited capacity to circulate large volumes of filtered air.

How to Choose an HVAC Air Filters with activated carbon

These are available for purchase online, e.g., through Amazon or Walmart, and at local stores. You must choose the correct sized filter for your HVAC system. 1) Check your furnace manual for the correct sized filter or check the existing filter to determine dimensions. Most filters have the size prominently displayed on the surface in numerous places. 2) Look for filters designated as HEPA or that are Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV)-rated. The higher the value, the more particles are removed. 3) Look for filters with activated charcoal or activated carbon. They are commonly labeled as "odor eliminator", "odor control", or "odor reduction."

Some Examples of Certified Portable Air Filters/Cleaners, as listed by the California Air Resources Board (CARB)

Brand	Model Name	Model Number	Type	Date Notified	EO Number
Aireox	Model 45x	45B	Mechanical	2020-01-23	G-20-009
Levoit	Tower Pro HEPA Air Purifier	LV-H134	Mechanical	2019-06-05	G-19-086
Winix	5300-2	5500-2	Electronic	2016-04-20	G-16-053
GermGuardian	Air Purifier	RAC5250PT	Electronic	2018-12-14	G-18-136

These are just listed as examples; other brands and models of portable HEPA filters with activated carbon/charcoal exist. The ones listed were found to be available on Amazon and at local stores.

CARB Certification

State regulation requires all air cleaners sold or distributed in California to be certified as not exceeding 50 parts per billion of ozone when tested using a specified test method. CARB offers a list of [certified air cleaner models](#) on its web page. Note that this certification only covers ozone emissions and electrical safety; it does not include performance testing for removal of particles or chemicals from the airstream.

Reimbursement Program

If you're a resident of **Carson or West Carson**, the County has a reimbursement program for the purchase of HVAC air filters, portable HEPA air filters, or temporary relocation during this public nuisance event. Please review the recommendations and guidance above before purchasing filters. Click [here](#) to submit for reimbursement or contact the Call Center at 800-675-HELP (4357). You can also visit <https://lacounty.gov/emergency/> for more information on the reimbursement program.